DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 425 096 SO 029 383

AUTHOR Stine, Deborah E.
TITLE Gender Specificity and the Attrition Process in Education.
PUB DATE 1998-00-00
NOTE 98p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Diego, CA, April 13-17, 1998). Also included is a summary of this paper.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Attrition (Research Studies); *Beginning Teachers; *Employed Women; *Faculty Mobility; *Females; *Mentors; *Sex Differences; Sex Stereotypes; Social Science Research; Womens Studies
IDENTIFIERS *Employee Attrition

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the question of why some beginning teachers terminate employment in the first 2 years and others do not. The investigation will be conceptually organized around the concepts presented in Becker and Carper's theoretical framework (1956). They identify four elements that beckon and retain individuals in an occupation: (1) occupational titles and associated ideology; (2) commitment to task; (3) commitment to particular organizations or institutional positions; and (4) significance for one's position in a larger society. A fifth related area is kinship responsibilities and family circumstances. The study examines each of these areas as related to beginning teachers and the attrition rate in the first two years. Nursing, social work, and teaching are reviewed and seen to have similarities in social attitudes toward the "semi-professions." Teaching, however, brings stability and the possibility of job-sharing, thus occasionally addressing familial responsibilities of its employees. The "helping" professions seem to exclude many man from its ranks. Rates of retention increase in these three professions when training and support is supplied for beginners in the areas of peer support and mentoring, inservicing to provide a clear definition of roles in the organization and its goals, valuing and positive self-esteem building of individuals, and participation in the decision making of the organization. Contains 38 references. (EH)

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Gender Specificity and the Attrition Process In Education

by

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Summary of Paper/Poster Session presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA., April 13-17, 1998. Direct correspondence to the author, California State University, School of Education, 5500 University Parkway, San Bernardino, CA 92407-2397 (email: debstine@wiley.csusb.edu). This summary provides early dissemination of research previous to publication.

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GENDER SPECIFICITY AND THE

ATTRITION PROCESS IN EDUCATION

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In the study of turnover within an occupation, it is important to address all major issues of the process. Missing in the analysis of reasons for attrition in the teaching occupation seems to be the impact of the socialization process within its borders. Mentoring is well researched in this area, but it would seem important to add the factors that contribute to an employee's personal feelings of identification with an occupation. Constrained labor markets in the areas of nursing, teaching and social work differ from the organizational structure of other professions at large (i.e., medicine, law). At one time nursing, teaching, and social work were some of the few career options considered appropriate for educated women (Parker, 1993). As the number of women who enter fields affording them high levels of autonomy (law, medicine, and engineering) increases, the number of qualified women available to enter other areas has been declining. Might those factors, and an individual's commitment to the profession play a role in their eventual staying or leaving? Also, would a study of similar (social work and nursing) and dissimilar (law & medicine) shed any light on the impact of the attrition rate in education?

Becker and Carper, in an extension of identification elements within an occupation (1956), compared three groups and suggested that there were four major elements of work identification within the three studied groups. The authors studied the genesis of identification with an occupation in students doing graduate work in the separate fields of physiology,

philosophy and mechanical engineering. The research provided strong support for the hypothesis that, across a wide variety of cultures and occupations, the level of worker control is positively associated with job satisfaction, and inversely associated with absenteeism (Parker, 1993). The necessary linkages to understanding the retention force of an occupation are: reasons for entering an occupation, reasons or elements that retain and reasons or elements that repel. Becker and Carper's study suggested the elements of identification that beckon and retain individuals in an occupation are: 1) Occupational title, and associated ideology; 2) Commitment to task (a major factor found in teacher studies); 3) Commitment to particular organizations or institutional positions; and 4) Significance for one's position in larger society.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The question that will be explored in this research study is: Why do some beginning teachers terminate employment in the first two years and some do not?

The investigation will be conceptually organized around the concepts presented in Becker and Carper's theoretical framework (1956), to analyze the literature in terms of the retention of employees in the semi-professions. The particular components which are present that may influence educators to stay in the profession as teachers, to stay in the profession and move up through the administrative ranks, or to leave the profession entirely will be examined. Added to this framework will be a significant area of family circumstances and kinship responsibilities which appear to contribute to the attrition process. In addition, comparative factors that retain teachers and those in other social occupations will be investigated.

These categories will be explored within the social service occupations of nursing, social work and teaching with a focus on similar and dissimilar affinities in each of the areas within an occupation.

It is the hope that the examination of these particular areas and their relationships may lead to an understanding of the reasons for staying or leaving, leading to a contribution to affect the likelihood of good teachers staying in education.

Discussion and Conclusions

Drawing on the conceptual framework of Becker and Carper (1956), this literature review highlights five areas of work identification that serve to provide an understanding for the reasons individuals within a particular occupation stay or leave. Becker and Carper address beginning occupants of "the professions" of physiology, philosophy, and mechanical engineering, identifying four major areas of work identification: 1) occupational title and associated ideology; 2) commitment to task; 3) commitment to particular organizations or institutional positions; and 4) significance for one's position in a larger society. A fifth area not identified by Becker and Carper, but revealed by this reviews concerns is kinship responsibilities and family circumstances. The further analysis of each of these areas offers grounding to the reasons for staying and leaving, and a position from which to compare the attrition and retention rate of beginning teachers.

The first area, that of occupational title and associated ideology, found great identity factors within the subjects of Becker and Carper's case (1956). Within teaching, the specifics and significance of identity factors are reported as: 1) attitudes that contribute to affective matters [these correlated with stayers] (Pigge, 1992; Juska, 1994); 2) peer support as a

major factor in establishing the identity of individuals within the profession (Bryne, 1994; Hewitt, 1993); 3) mentoring programs as critical for the retention of first and second year teachers (Brookhart, 1992); and 4) understanding of the goals of an organization (Cunningham, 1982, 1983; Bryne, 1994) and roles within it. (This can avoid role conflict which correlates with a higher rate of attrition within the occupation.)

The second highlighted indicator, commitment to task, refers to the elements of attachment, or lack of them, to a specific set of tasks and ways of handling them. Pigge (1992) examined persisters and nonpersisters in teaching, forming the conclusion that assurance about the decision to teach and positive attitude relate directly to teachers that are staying in the field. The Carnegie Forum Task Force (Bobbitt, 1995) indicators found that teachers who were placed at the center of school decision-making were more committed to the task of teaching with "incompetent and uncooperative administrators" named as detractors; this was also corroborated through additional research (Cunningham, 1982; Bryne, 1994; Lortie, 1975; Natale, 1993; Hewitt, 1993).

Questions were raised within the research concerning task behaviors that were indicants of role conflict in teachers, including: 1) quantity and quality of work; 2) class size and special needs students; and 3) negative support from parents and administration in regard to disciplinary measures (Bryne, 1994; Hewitt, 1993; Bartell, 1995; Rollefson, 1990).

Thirdly, the issue of commitment to a particular organization or institutional position was defined and reviewed through a literature base. The salient specifics enumerated within this field were identified by degree of importance to the individual. The named categories include job security and clarity of hierarchical responsibilities. A conflict is often encountered

among professionals who desire and expect a large degree of organizational control (Scott, 1969). Professional engineers in Becker and Carper's study (1956) reflected assurance of job availability, while the philosophy students, in contrast, expressed a vagueness of understanding of these areas and their specific future. Questions were raised concerning the commitment of teachers to their organization through the research, offering a resounding reply that compared the differences in personal assurance (or positive self-esteem) directly to the rate of staying or leaving in the occupations (Farber, 1991; Bryne, 1994; Hewitt, 1993). This causal relationship pointed to the need for more research in this area if the schools are to retain their good teachers. Research additionally indicated that educators respond to extrinsic, ancillary and intrinsic work rewards with varying degrees of commitment toward the organization (Lortie, 1969). The areas of ancillary and intrinsic rewards emerged as characteristically dominant as reasons for individuals to enter the occupation. These are factors that need to be further considered in the professional development programs available to educators.

The fourth indicant of identification within an occupation, was that of social position, a reference to a person's position in the larger society. Individuals found in this study provided similarities to the area of teaching, where research indicated that the majority of individuals entering the profession also experience a raise of social position from their current status (Bobbitt, 1995). This would seem to be an important factor in the retention of teachers, and is, but is often mediated in perception by the demographics of the area in which educators practice their craft (Ingersoll & Rossi, 1995; Hart & Assoc., 1992).

A fifth element contribution to the conceptual framework of Becker and Carper (1956) was added through this research. Research has shown that differential factors begin to separate the "professions" and the "semi-professions" (teaching, nursing and social work) by the

element of gender as evidenced through kinship and familial responsibilities. The size of the domestic work load and increased familial responsibilities were found to be constraining areas found within the "semi-professions" (Agassi, 1979; Simpson, 1969). Studies also indicated that dissimilar attitudes towards employment are prevalent in men and women, leading to a difference in the degree to which one commits to employment.

These semi-professions are similar in the association of a feminine area of work, a lack of autonomy on the job, and bureaucratic constraints resulting in less prestige for the members of the occupations (Toren, 1969). Elementary education finds more in common with these areas than secondary education, and often, as a result, finds it difficult to recruit more men into its ranks. There seems to be in the eyes of the public, and the profession itself, a certain "rank ordering" - the younger the child being taught, the less the prestige associated with the occupation. Indeed, it is not until ones moves totally away from children, to administration, that one finds a predominance of men and resultant associated prestige.

The similarities between teaching, nursing and social work are great, but three areas that contribute significantly to attrition that contrast teaching with the latter occupations are important ones. These are the long and sporadic hours, unclear role definition and demeaning tasks within the professions of nursing and social work. Teaching brings with it stability, and the possibility for job-sharing, thus occasionally addressing familial responsibilities of its employees.

The reason most stated for entering the professions of teaching, nursing and social work reminds all readers of the nurturing nature of the professions themselves. It is to "make a difference" or "to help" (Agassi, 1979). This seems to be the draw that brings the majority to the occupations, and continues to exclude many men from its ranks. Research reminds us that

rates of retention increase in all three professions when training and support is supplied for beginning individuals in the areas of : 1) peer support and mentoring; 2) Inservicing to provide a clear definition of roles in the organization and its goals; 3) Valuing and positive self-esteem building of individuals; and 4) Participation in the decision making of the organization. The role of decision making is a significant one with immense implications for the growth of each of the discussed "semi-professions".

Finally, there is another area that of necessity must be addressed. In the "semi-professions" technical skill is named again and again as a culprit, keeping teachers, nurses and social workers beneath their "superiors". Technical skill needs to be combined with theoretical study if prestige is to be gained within these occupations. One suggestion for implementation of such a program would be through action research in teaching, combined with administration and higher education. A similar program could also be implemented through copractitioner and mentoring programs in other helping professions.

The five areas reviewed help to explain the salient factors in the low retention rate of teachers; however, there has been little research conducted recently concerning the changes underway in the semi-professions. If there is to be a change, an attitude needs to accompany it, addressing the lack of professionality in theory and substance in what have been referred to as the semi-professions.

This work raises questions in the field of retention of beginning teachers; If good teachers are to be retained, current practice and research needs to acknowledge the previous detractors that are primarily associated with the dominance of women in the occupation (particularly elementary) and correct them by addressing the need for professionality of the individuals within the occupation.

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The question that will be explored in this paper is: Why do some beginning teachers terminate employment in the first two years and some do not?

The investigation will apply the concepts presented in Becker and Carper's theoretical framework (1956) to analyze the literature in terms of the retention of employees in the semi-professions. The particular factors that are present and may influence educators to stay in the teaching profession, to stay in the profession and move up through the administrative ranks, or to leave the profession entirely will be examined. Of significance are the number of areas of similarity of stress and strain in teaching, social work and nursing (Etzioni, 1969). Because of this similarity, common comparative factors that retain teachers and those in other social occupations will be investigated. The "semi-professions" (teaching, social work and nursing) as examined by Etzioni (1969) were distinguished from the "professions", because the "semi-professions" exist as mostly feminine occupations that are given less status in the work world than some of the more male dominated occupations of medicine, law, and engineering. This similarity revealed by Etzioni was

revisited, because general theories across the 3 semi-professions will reinforce the themes that characterize the teaching profession. Research additionally revealed another possible contribution to this framework (Becker & Carper, 1956), adding the significant fields of family circumstances and kinship responsibilities that appear to augment the attrition process in the semi-professions.

The review of the literature is organized around Becker and Carper's theoretical framework (1956) identifying four major elements of work identification:

1) occupational title and associated ideology;

2) commitment to task;

3) commitment to particular organizations or institutional positions; and

4) significance for one's position in larger society.

These categories will be explored within the social service occupations of nursing, social work and teaching with a focus on similar and dissimilar affinities of each of the areas within an occupation.

It is the hope that the examination of these particular areas and their relationships may lead to an understanding of the reasons for

staying or leaving, leading to a contribution to affect the likelihood of good teachers staying in education.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In the study of turnover within an occupation, it is important to address major factors affecting the process. Becker and Carper, in a study identifying elements within an occupation that relate to individuals staying and leaving a profession (1956), compared three groups and suggested that there were four major elements of work identification within the studied groups. The authors studied the genesis of identification within an occupation in male students doing graduate work in the separate fields of physiology, philosophy and mechanical engineering. The research provided strong support for the hypothesis that, across a wide variety of cultures and occupations, the level of worker control is positively associated with job satisfaction (leading to retention), and inversely associated with job dissatisfaction, (leading to attrition) (Parker,1993). The necessary linkages to understanding the retention force of an occupation are: reasons for entering an occupation, reasons or elements that retain and reasons or elements that repel. Becker and Carper's study, through the examination of occupational title

and associated ideology, commitment to task, commitment to particular organizations or institutional positions, and significance for one's position in a larger society, suggests the elements of identification that beckon and retain individuals in an occupation, and thus provides an excellent vehicle for analysis.

OCCUPATIONAL TITLE, AND ASSOCIATED IDEOLOGY

The first element identified by Becker and Carper (1956) is occupational title or associated ideology, which suggests that names of work tend to carry a great deal of symbolic meaning and tend to be incorporated into an identity. This symbolic identity:

> A) Specifies an area of endeavor belonging to those bearing the name, and locates this area in relation to similar kinds of activity; and B) Implies a great deal about the characteristics of the bearers, and these meanings are systematized into elaborate ideologies which itemize the qualities, interests, and capabilities of those so identified. (p. 342)

According to this research, the title and its implications may be an object of attachment or avoidance. This information, gleaned from a study of several occupations, suggests how individuals are called or attracted

to the occupation and how they are held in the occupation.

According to Becker and Carper (1956), the engineers they studied shared the feeling that "it is a good thing to be an engineer." The majority had no attachment to any particular part of their field; their "specialty" was described as the broad area of "technical work". The physiology students, in contrast, felt themselves to be part of a larger group, devoted to building the edifice of science, and prided themselves on their participation in this endeavor and on the ultimate value of their work to society in the cure and prevention of disease. Both the engineers and physiologists took great pride in their occupational title. In contrast, the philosophers had very little attachment to their occupation available. The authors felt that the philosophers, as a group, had chosen their occupational title simply as the least undesirable one available, since it would place them in the society's division of labor while allowing them to deal with a broad range of interests ordinarily divided between many specialties.

Identity and Ideology: Teaching

With the framework of Becker and Carper to guide this comparative study, identity and ideology within an occupation will be examined in the

field of teaching.

Attitudes contribute to affective matters and have been reported through research to contribute to the rate of attrition in several professions and semi-professions. Pigge (1992) reported in a longitudinal teacher study on teacher attrition that those teachers who stayed responded with positive attitudes toward the "ideal" or "ideology" of teaching as a career, an indicator of identification with the helping or educating profession, as the greatest thing that they could be doing. In the study, data from nonpersisters and persisters in teacher preparation were analyzed. The only significant difference in the groups' personal characteristics was the extent of the prospective teachers' assurance about becoming teachers. This revealed elements of identity through self-esteem and self-assurance as an issue of primary importance in the examination process of teacher attrition. Teachers who possessed a high degree of self-esteem and self-assurance responded through questionnaires that they were committed to the profession of teaching; inversely, the teachers lacking the same elements had a higher rate of attrition from the occupation.

Based on interviews of two high school English teachers, Juska

(1994) addressed the ideology of occupation through the concept of integrity. In it, Juska looks for a simple definition of what the "integrity of the classroom" might entail. Juska borrows from Webster's definition of integrity as "firm adherence to a code of moral or artistic values" and " a soundness, a completeness, a state of being complete or undivided" (p. 54). The author concludes that it is what makes possible all that is fine and rare in teaching. Its absence, however, defined through classroom climate clears the way for the banality and mediocrity that public school teachers are accused of every day. Becker and Carper would characterize the symbolic identity, as expressed through title (teacher) and activity (educating), implying that the characteristics of the bearers include the concept of integrity for success. These authors itemized in their study the qualities, interests and capabilities of those so identified. As beginning teachers evolve to form and create an identity and ideology within their profession, integrity is an important component that can help define the occupation itself. It must be observed and internalized as a part of the profession. Classroom teachers need the ideology and the integrity to promote that "wholeness" that is found within its definition, with it the presence or absence of positive classroom climate can become a

controlling factor in the attrition process of teachers (Juska, 1994).

The literature additionally explored the role of peer support as a major factor in establishing the identity of professionals within the teaching profession. Peer support is described as a causal component of the retention of teachers, rather than a factor that causes their demise. Mentoring provides the structure within which three dimensions essential to the formation of an identity of an occupation have the potential to occur and to subsist. This assemblage may be experienced through the guidance of an experienced professional: 1) developing the ideology of the profession; 2) developing an identity; and 3) confirming and shaping the specific identity of teachers through modeling behaviors (Byrne, 1994).

Bryne identified in her 1994 study that peer support was found to make a significant contribution to the success and ultimate retention of the teacher. She suggested from her findings that it appears that the presence or absence of administrators support bears little on a teacher's self-esteem; of more importance is the support of his or her colleagues who share the same work environment. New teachers found support from peers in formulation and confirmation of the identity process. These findings were also shared by Hewitt in the 1993 report expressing that

insufficient mentoring was a pivotal factor in the decision of a teacher to stay or leave. The author reaffirms the concept that the identity of neophyte instructors is established and reinforced through peer support.

The importance of peer support, in the form of mentoring programs for first and second year teachers, has been identified as critical. These programs are designed to help ease the new teacher's transition from student (in the teacher preparation program) to teacher, and to guide the new teacher through his/her first two years in the profession.

States and districts have created mentoring programs as a way to inculcate the identity process within the profession, reverse the traditional sink or swim indoctrination of fledgling teachers and to reduce the isolation and absence of collegiality that most teachers find discouraging (Brookhart, 1992).

New teachers do not emerge from their college\university preparation as fully formed professionals. They vary greatly in the skills and life experiences which they bring to the classroom. Newly prepared teachers need to be supported in making the transition from novice to experienced professional. Such support links preservice preparation with the real world of practice, linking the process of identity formation to

successful classroom practice.

The research of the California New Teacher Project conducted by the Southwest Regional Educational Laboratory (Ward & Dianda, 1990) has demonstrated some benefits of providing support. They are:

> 1) New teacher retention rates are higher (66% in their study of 6,000 teachers) when new teachers receive support; 2) New teachers spend more time planning instruction when they receive support; 3) The intensity of support provided is positively related to new teachers' instructional practices; 4) Intensity of support is also related to student engagement rates; and 5) New teachers feel that support contributes to their success. (p. 56)

Clearly, mentoring programs can bring not only positive results but result in the shaping of an identity within the profession. The California New Teacher Support Program, which followed 6,000 teachers who were mentored or received other intensive support from 1988 to 1992, reduced the attrition rate of new teachers by two-thirds (Pearson, 1992). Teaching is a challenge under any conditions; however, novice teachers are faced with the task of performing, in their first year the same duties and tasks of a twenty year veteran teacher. Few other

professions require that novices assume so much responsibility so early in their careers.

A second factor, that of identity within an occupation, is established through an understanding of the interplay of roles that must be enacted within and among the overarching goals of the organization. For this to occur, the individuals also need to have a grasp of their role or place in the organization. When this does not occur, role conflict and role ambiguity can cause frustrations to the individuals involved. The literature discusses these as important determinants of burnout, leading to attrition of teachers (Cunningham, 1982, 1983). Role conflict is defined by Bryne (1994) as the "simultaneous occurrence of two or more sets of pressures such that the compliance with one makes more difficult compliance with the other."

Schempp et al (1993), discussed the pressures of role demands upon the teachers, as they began their careers searching for an identity. Role demands pressed upon the teachers at two levels: classroom and institutional. The norms and expectations of school culture additionally influenced the teachers' professional perspectives and standards of practice.

Becker and Carper discuss the three professions of physiology, engineering, and philosophy examining and noting the significance of a title that translates into identification with a profession. A teacher or educator is the professional title assumed by those entering the educational profession, implying the imparting of knowledge to students. The identity within the occupations described by Becker and Carper was much larger than their titles, as is the case with educators. The title indicated a beginning, and peers who modeled appropriate role behaviors within an ascribed environment carried to a new professional an understanding of the ideology that helped in the formation of their roles through modeling and guidance. While an informal process in many occupations, mentoring is the vehicle found within the educational environment, one that has proved to be invaluable in the process of identity formation.

Identity: Nursing

The profession of nursing posits similar results to the teaching profession within its literature base. Ideologies held and identities assumed have been studied by Birnbaum & Somers (1991) using a sample of staff nurses. Positive attitudes towards a nurturing profession was

continually mentioned as contributing to the satisfaction of the sample studied. The research specifically identified the effect of prevocational contact on postentry behavior, which may be likened to peer support and mentoring in the teaching profession. Nurses experience, in the internship, instruction in the day to day process as well as collegiality resulting an identification within the profession. Prevocational contact consists of an internship that culminates upon graduation to practicing professionals. Unlike educators, this type of mentoring generally concluded at their graduation, rather than continuing into their practice. This prevocational contact often also included volunteer work, exposing them to the day to day activities and demands that surround them.
The results indicated that those nurses who had prevocational contact with the nursing occupation had different conceptions of the nursing role, more identification (a concept of sameness in all that constitutes the objective reality of a position), less role conflict, and more positive work attitudes than those who did not have prevocational contact with the profession.

Becker & Carper's work mentions that membership in an occupational group provides a context for the evaluation of work experiences. Van

Maanane & Barley (1984) add that this evaluation process affects postentry behavior through occupational image identification, occupationally defined work roles (Hughes, 1958), and occupationally derived work attitudes (Birnbaum & Somers, 1986). Peers provide a context in the professions described by Becker and Carper for the evaluation of the work experience through a sharing process that reinforces the commonalities present, i.e. "it is a good thing to be an engineer". The specifics of identification, roles and attitudes are an extension of that sharing and redefining process. Physiology and mechanical engineering students shared an environment where that reinforcement could continually take place. Teachers also share a similar environment with their peers. Nurses, while sharing prevocational nurturing through a mentoring type process, are subject to the dictates of the physician once employed and often respond to a skill rather than a knowledge level that places them in stature beneath the physician. Dissimilar schedules often do not promote a similarly shared environment within the nursing profession as well.

The results of the studies of Van Maane and Barley (1984), Hughes (1958), and Birnbaum and Somers (1986) suggested that different patterns

of occupational socialization in the nursing profession are based on the presence and duration of prevocational experience and affected by subsequent adaptation to work. The influence of prevocational experience determined as a positive or negative definition (or interpretation) of occupational role and the identity established with it.

Etzioni (1969) points to the identification factors of nursing, describing an employed body who have less autonomy than doctors and one that seeks professional status, while often performing menial tasks. Nurses experience an isolation in identity patterns as they work with their patients and vary their movements according to the dictates of the shift. The identity is considered by society at large to be one of assumption of female gender as a majority within the occupation.

Identity: Social Work

This isolation experienced in the nursing profession is taken to another level within the social service occupations. Social service employees, in comparison, experience a more severe isolation than either the teaching or nursing professional. Often the social services employee is one who has an extremely large case load and interacts with those individuals, finally returning to write up the necessary paperwork. This

similarity is shared with individuals within the nursing profession, who are isolated from the knowledge base and separated from the duties of the physicians. Gleason-Wynn (1995) discusses significant factors responding to a lack of peer identification within the occupation, the totality of job autonomy and the need to help individual clients in a sea of demands and overload. Isolation in the occupation lends itself to the formation of a weak identity; the individuals in the profession have little opportunity to share and offer support for one another. The findings of this study have implications for social workers who are challenged by a lack of training for the job, by a lack of understanding by other staff about social work functions within particular environments, and by the lack of adequate continuing education programs designed to enhance their job.

Lyons et. al (1995) examined the career paths of social workers during the period between 1979 and 1991. Lack of patterns of identification were prevalent in the study, and the proportion of men entering the field declined over the study period, while the number of women and ethnic minorities increased. Conclusions reached included an identification factor that was present for women and lacking for men. Another area found to be prevalent in the occupation is that of unrealistic

expectations in the area of client care. Identity, and congruence with the conception of a role and the actual demands of the roles of social workers were examined by Radcliffe & Baker (1979) resulting in unrealistic expectations of social workers in the area of client care. The only exception, cited by the study, explored rural care-givers and found that they were more satisfied and had more of an accurate evaluation of their identities than their counterparts, due to the lowered stress and client load in that particular setting.

In social work, less autonomy than that which is granted to the established prestige professions is indicated by certain objective attributes of the profession. There is little legal regulation in the form of licensure, which restricts practice to those who hold a license (as in medicine), or certification, which restricts the use of title to those who have a certain training, or privileged communications with clients, which exempts the practitioner-client verbal interchange from any outside interference, including that of the courts (as in the practice of law) (Toren, 1969, as cited in Etzioni, 1969). These factors limit a specific categorization of the occupation of social work, and thus limit the degree of identification experienced by its employees.

Identity is revealed through research as an important factor in retention in the semi-professions of teaching, nursing and social work. The achievement of an identification process is garnered through the mentoring process, peer support and occupational ideology in all three cases, however, a detractor remain in the degree of isolation experienced in these gender specific occupations.

COMMITMENT TO TASK

Becker and Carper (1956), in their study examined male students and their commitment to task as measured by their involvement in the tasks represented through their work. Commitment to task varied among the professions according to the degree of autonomy or involvement in the decision making process expressed through the work. In examination of the "semi-professions" the comparison is made primarily to occupations that rely heavily on female participation for their workforce. While this is and important comparison, occupations may also be compared with reference to the degree to which their members express a commitment to a specific kind of work. Webster defines commitment as "the act of binding to a trust or obligation, something pledged" and "the state of being obligated or emotionally impelled." This binding, or attachment as a force

is used to compare the members of specific professions. The elements of attachment, or lack of it, to 1) a specific set of tasks - in education, working with children, observing the developmental stages, content, and control for learning to take place and 2) ways of handling them (French & Raven refer to this as referent power), as well as a feeling of capability to engage in such activity or efficacy also plays an important part in identification with one's work.

Commitment to Task: Teaching

Chapman (1986) contributed to the literature and knowledge base through a theoretical model that suggested that a number of components could lead to success or failure in the first two years of teaching experience. These include the areas of teacher candidates' personal characteristics and initial commitment to the task of teaching. Pigge (1992) examined persisters and nonpersisters identified throughout teacher training and determined that the persisting teacher candidates reported greater assurance about their decision to teach, expressed less concern about the task of teaching, and reported more positive attitudes about teaching as a career than did their nonpersisting cohorts. The

positive attitudes expressed by the persisters were indicants correlated with a commitment factor (Pigge, 1992).

Among the many organizational factors that are discussed in the literature, one that stands out as perhaps the most far-reaching, as indicated by the Carnegie Forum Task Force, in the form of a recommendation, puts teachers at the center of school decision-making (Bobbitt, 1995). Members of the National Education Association reported in 1991 that what hindered them most in their teaching was "incompetent and uncooperative administrators". Additionally, an NCES study found that many teachers who left the profession felt that "giving more authority in the school and their classrooms" was essential to retaining good educators." In a 1995 study, Sharon Bobbitt, senior statistician at the National Center for Educational Statistics, reported that approximately 8% of teachers leave every year (Bobbitt, 1995). This was also corroborated by a previous study by Cunningham (1982).

The task of teaching is defined through a series of decision-making skills. Decisions are made concerning children, content and control within the classroom. Outside of the classroom, decision making for educators can include empowerment to allow teachers to be "on the same track"

regarding the mission of their school and education in general, and to feela part of their school. Commitment is linked to the degree of empowerment of teachers in the decision making process - the greater the involvement of instructors in the decision process, the greater the commitment to the profession as evidenced through persistence (Bryne, 1994). Good teaching is good professional judgment carried on continuously.

In a study by Bryne (1994) lack of decision making power and ability to exercise professional judgments was a key determinant of burnout and resultant attrition. It seems apparent, as noted over a decade ago by Lortie (1975), that the nonparticipation of teachers in decisions that bear directly on their daily work environment leads both to a decline of self-esteem and to strong feelings of external control by others. Natale (1993) agrees that decision making is an important factor that can contribute to the attrition rate of the teachers. Hewitt (1993), additionally cites lack of participation in decision making at the school site as reason for the attrition rate.

Task commitment may be examined through the expectations of individuals in the job situation. The expectations are the enactment of

any number of roles, with an emphasis on a balance between them. Individuals studied by Hewitt (1993) demonstrated a greater commitment to task on the job when roles met their expectations in the workplace, and were not accompanied by an overburdening through excess duties.

Role conflict as previously defined in the area of identity or ideology encompasses certain task behaviors as well (Byrne, 1994). Common examples of task behaviors that were indicators of role conflict for teachers were: 1) quantity of work to be done and quality of work realistically possible within time constraints, 2) meeting the demands of overly large classes comprising students of diverse ability levels and meeting the needs of individual students, and 3) taking positive action in resolving student disciplinary problems and coping with negative or neutral support from administrators and parents. This same factor was redefined by Hewitt in 1993, using the terminology unclear expectations as a substitute for the terminology "role conflict."

Tasks at the school site become more difficult when additional factors are added for the educators to address, reducing the efficiency of the classroom teacher (Bartell, 1995). A case in point, California

schools, are populated with the most diverse student population in the world. Of the more than 4.9 million students attending California's public schools, one-third come from homes where languages other than English are spoken (Bartell, 1995). Providing a quality education for all children in such an environment can be difficult for very experienced teachers, especially when there is a lack of understanding of tasks required, but the task can often be overwhelming for novices. The novice often lacks the ideology and identification with the task, resulting in a lack of commitment. Rollefson (1990), in a descriptive study of patterns of entry and exit from the teaching profession corroborates this information, adding that attrition increases as the percentage of minority students in the student body increases.

To understand commitment to task within the professions it is necessary to look at factors that include the elements of attachment or lack of it to a specific set of tasks, ways of handling them, and the efficacy to carry them out through role understanding and identification. It also points to the importance of involvement of educators in the decision making process, exercising professional judgments. The literature points to a direct relationship between commitment to task

within the teaching profession as defined through these elements and the retention of teachers.

Commitment to Task: Nursing

The literature discusses commitment to task in the nursing profession through a number of vehicles. Etzioni (1969) cited interviews of nurses that revealed that the "heart of being a professional nurse is a commitment to personal care of patients, not a commitment to abstract systems of knowledge" (p.76). But, another side of this picture, also mentioned by Etzioni(1969) is that "rank-and-file nurses generally appear to have less commitment to *professionalism* , as defined through tasks performed efficiently, than their leaders. This, the author states, is not merely a matter of belief; it is apparently translated into action, namely into high rates of departure at the time of marriage and high rates of part time nursing when economic and family circumstances permit (p. 73). The task itself and the hours assigned are issues of extreme importance within the profession and determinants of turnover as well.

Gender is found to be an issue in the commitment or lack of it to the task at hand. Certain obligations tend to lessen the overall commitment

of the worker, and these are all found in professions dominated primarily by women (Hiscott & Connop, 1990). The literature presents the factors of kinship responsibilities and shift length as predictors of negative impact upon individuals in the nursing profession, and possibly upon their eventual turnover. These predictors of negative impact within the nursing profession were significantly correlated with a lessening of the commitment to task. Hiscott & Connop (1990) examine the impact of shift length (regular shifts of about eight hours versus extended shifts of twelve hours) on the incidence of job turnover among nursing professionals employed at a large Canadian hospital. The data indicated that shift length was important, but that it could not be viewed in isolation. The impact of shift length on turnover was mediated by marital status and children living at home. These family status attributes, seemed either to promote or hinder job changes, internal or external.

Murray and Smith (1988) reported that nurses lacked commitment to task when the work hours were not regular. The authors also reported that, due to the significance of gender, and the need to be caregivers in the home with multiple obligations, that this commitment to task lessened as the work hours became more irregular. From a sample of 1240

registered nurses in the province, forty per cent identified problems regarding scheduling or shift. Thirty-four percent of these nurses identified hours of work as the worst thing about nursing. Similar sentiments were express by Ontario nursing assistants, while thirty per cent mentioned hours of work as a bad aspect of nursing (Hiscott & Connop, 1990). In the Canadian study (Hiscott & Connop, 1990), the annual turnover was 13.8% in 1986 for all Ontario hospital nurses, with the supply simply not keeping up with the demand.

In the Ontario study two samples were used. One was a probability sample stratified by major occupational group of regular staff with at least one year work experience at the hospital, employed at the hospital at the time of interviewing (between November 1987 and April 1988). The second sample was comprised of professionals who had left the hospital over a three year period (between 1984 and 1987). The results led to the conclusion that if nurses were faced with significant job stressors, their commitment to task decreases.

Research on employee turnover has usually relied on employment status (quitters vs. stayers) to index the criterion variable (turnover), and on multiple regression (MR) to model the turnover process. In a study by

Ng, Cram and Jenkins (1991), based on a national sample of nurses in New Zealand (n=1249), employment status was studied as a continuous measure, namely job survival duration (length of employment starting from the time of the survey).

Gender has previously been defined in the literature as significant in relationship to the degree of task commitment expressed through an employee. Another area of importance defined by Ng, Cram and Jenkins (1991) is marital status. This study, in the pattern of previous studies acknowledge the large percentage of women within the occupation. This is an important factor that continually recurs within the literature. Newly graduated nurses were found to usually work in their first nursing job for a limited period of time and afterward resign to travel or get married (King & Fletcher, 1980). If they returned to a nursing job, most of the nurses in this category were more likely to keep their second job for a longer period of time than their first. Compared to nurses who were married, the commitment to task of the single nurses were negative, as they were more likely to resign, probably due to their greater ease of changing their job (King & Fletcher, 1980).

Another predictor that was examined was that of a housing

mortgage. Nurses who were carrying a housing mortgage were more likely to remain in employment for financial reasons than nurses who were not financially committed in this way. Finally, an organizational variable was included that was related to the quality of support facilities experienced by the nurses. The authors found these factors to be significant in forecasting turnover, and also suggested that the demographic predictors of marital status and training could be readily assimilated into workforce planning and forecasting. A final important comment that may extend to other social work fields, is the author's commentary that "it is not necessarily dysfunctional for a hospital to have a certain turnover as one means of creating vacancies for new recruits, even though an extremely high level would result in a low quality of health service" (p. 1327).

Jackson (1983) in a causal model proposed to describe the effect of participation in decision making on perceived influence and absenteeism and turnover intention as predictors of a lack of commitment to task. The participants were nursing employees. In this study participation in decision making appeared to be an important determinant of role strains and resultant lack of commitment to task. Individuals that experienced a lack of empowerment in decision making were found to exhibit less

positive behaviors that might indicate a commitment to task. One frequently suggested strategy (Jackson, 1983) for reducing job strain was increased participation in decision making. A stated goal of this study was to demonstrate that reducing strain can benefit organizations by reducing turnover and absenteeism. As a result of the repeated interchanges required by participative decision making, the authors concluded that members of the organization can gain better understanding of the demands and constraints faced by others, at least to the extent that communication between member is informative or integrative (Schuler, 1980).

An alternative to the argument that mere belief in one's ability to influence the environment is a means to reducing strain is that participation in decision making enables workers to remove obstacles to effective performance, thereby reducing frustration and strain (Karasek, 1979). Parker (1993), using a sample of hospital nurses, tested the hypothesis that control over decision-making contributes to an individual's willingness to dissent when faced with injustice, and can be directly correlated with their intentions to exit. Parker found that if people believe the organization did not allow them an influential role in

decision making, it was likely they would decide to leave that organization, provided that option was available. This finding is in corroboration with Becker and Carper's work that suggests that a lack of autonomy on the job leads to attrition. At the time of the study, nurses were currently in high demand, making the exit option more viable. When the conflicts workers face become clear, perhaps for the first time, negotiation is likely to begin over which expectations should be changed in order to reduce inherent conflicts.

Nicolson (1975) discusses work dissatisfaction as predictive of the propensity of nurses to leave the occupation along with the importance of their perception of any lack of existing involvement in decision-making. The hypothesis states that high work dissatisfaction is more likely to impel labor turnover than absence, while the nature of the worker's involvement at the workplace (existing influence) more critically determines this attendance motivation and susceptibility to causal absence.

It appears that organizational changes that enlarge the scope of employees' local level of work involvement and decision-making are likely to enhance their motivation to attend work regularly to some extent

regardless of their effect on employees' felt satisfaction with work.

In contrast, the affective response of the employees to intrinsic aspects of work is more relevant to their leaving behaviors. Additionally, reduction in the labor turnover of a work force may be best attained by strategies that achieve the optimum match between employee needs, abilities, and expectations, and job demands (for example, through sophisticated approaches to the selection, placement and training of workers) (Karasek, 1979).

Karasek (1979), in a stress management study of job strain developed and tested with recent national survey data from Sweden and the U. S., found consistently that it is the combination of low decision latitudes with heavy job demands that is associated with mental strain and job dissatisfaction. These results were corroborated by Parker (1993), who examined nurses who have had extensive responsibilities, but only limited authority, finding that it is precisely this type of job, with high demand and limited control that is most stressful.

Two survey research traditions have emerged to deal with the psychosexual effects of work environments. One tradition focuses on job decision latitude (decision authority or skill level) and the other treats

stressors on the job.

Most of the literature on job satisfaction and mental strain focuses primarily on job decision latitude (Karasek, 1979; Parker, 1993). In Karasek's study, the two factors of exhaustion and depression were isolated. The exhaustion factor was based on responses of tiredness in the morning and complete exhaustion in the evening. The depression indicator was constructed from responses of nervousness, anxiety, sleeping problems; worry and depression. The author found that the highest satisfaction occurred with "active jobs" where both the challenge of high job demands and the opportunity for significant use of judgment and discretion were available.

Parker (1993) additionally found that it was expected that exit, or even considering a secure job, such as nursing, would also require considerable psychological resources. Additional findings included that one of the most common reasons left their jobs voluntarily was to maximize the quality of their working lives.

Comparatively, role ambiguity has also been linked to ineffective coping and to turnover in the nursing profession. Shalit (1977) analyzed 75 psychological studies in an attempt to assess the types of situations

that were most likely to produce effective behavior in response to task situations. He found that behavioral effectiveness (performance) was negatively related to both the number of possible alternative interpretations a person could have for a situation, and the ease with which these interpretations could be ranked for appropriateness. Perhaps one's inability to be effective in ambiguous situations is one cause for the positive relationship between role ambiguity and propensity to leave or turnover. Although intention to stay or leave an organizations may not perfectly predict turnover, it has been identified as an important precursor to turnover among nurses (Price & Mueller, 1981).

Similar to the results obtained in the study by Price & Mueller, Bedeian & Armenakis (1981) found that role conflict and ambiguity in the nursing profession were direct determinants of tension (emotional strain), which in turn was directly related to job satisfaction, and negatively related to propensity to leave.

The assumption that role conflict and ambiguity should have direct effects on emotional strain or tension and that emotional strain should in turn lead to lowered job satisfaction, which should increase the propensity to leave among nurses is pervasive in the literature (Bedeian &

Armenakis, 1981; Brief & Aldag, 1976; Johnson, 1973).

Etzioni (1969) points to the commitment in the nursing profession as a personal commitment to patients. Here the commitment to task refers to those areas that impact patient care. When care-giving is interrupted by a lack of autonomy and a role in the decision making process concerning the patients, disillusionment and attrition often result.

The large female population found within the profession adds complexity to the mix that did not exist in Becker and Carper's all male study. As a mostly feminine occupation, issues that connect to a lack of commitment to task include conflicts present in nurses unable to fulfill a dual role of wife and professional. Nursing brings with it conflict-ridden areas that create this disaccord and lead to attrition in the ranks. Some of these areas that confound a commitment to task are: long and irregular hours, lack of support vehicles, job demands and lack of decision making or autonomy on the job. The nature of the profession subordinates the woman, most often the nurse, to the male, most often the doctor and competes with the most cited need (Etzioni, 1969) to share a personal commitment with patients, leading to disillusionment and attrition.

Commitment to Task: Social Service Occupations

Surveying the literature in the social service occupations, issues of complexity again arise, adding again the important area of gender. The social service occupations are female dominated (Koeske & Kirk, 1995), and this domination impacts the issues that concern its workers and lead to attrition in the ranks. The commitment to task found within the occupations is not unlike that found in the nursing occupation (Etzioni, 1969); professionals join its ranks with the intention of committing to tasks that assist clients in their personal lives.

Koeske & Kirk (1995) studied the degree to which the relationship of sociopsychological characteristics of human service workers to their subsequent morale and continuance on the job was related. Specifically, the authors were looking for factors that influence the commitment to task in the social service occupations.

In a 4-wave panel study of 82 intensive case managers (50% social workers who had caseloads of clients with severe mental disorders), explored the relationships between 16 predictors and worker outcomes. The major findings, that those from lower social class backgrounds and with higher starting salaries, were the most consistent and significant

predictors of lower burnout, higher job satisfaction, and generally higher worker morale at later points in time. Individuals in opposing categories (those of higher social class backgrounds and lower starting salaries) were found to exhibit less of a commitment to the task at hand (often a large amount of paperwork in isolation with other individuals), which was in conflict with their original intentions, to help people. These same individuals have higher attrition rates in the occupation. Those workers with more experience had a tendency to perceive greater client improvement, and stay on the job due to the intrinisic satisfaction perceived.

Scott has noted (1969, as cited in Etzioni, 1969) that one way in which professionals dispose of unpleasant tasks is to define them as sub-professional and assign them to less favored occupational groups. These tasks, rated as "second-rate" and their implementation that is relegated to ranks of social workers bear significantly on reasons for attrition in the social occupations. Thus, "some functions are down-graded: bed-making and housekeeping for nursing; 'means test' (establishing client eligibility) interviewing for social workers. The people who do them are also down-graded or else a new category of non-professional people is

introduced into the system to perform these tasks" (p. 114). Additionally, as the literature demonstrates, women dominate this occupation, and women are subordinated through many of the tasks required. This leads to lower morale and higher attrition rates. Social workers do not express a commitment to those tasks that are deemed less than 'casework. In the study carried out by Scott (1969), social workers distinguished between "casework" - the providing of professional services to clients and "caseload management - organizing one's work so as to meet agency deadlines and make visits to clients on schedule. Superiors continue to define caseload management as a professional function of equal importance to casework, but social workers express the commitment to the task of casework, rather than what they perceive to be bureaucratic tasks that are beneath their training.

The downgrading of the tasks required leads to a lessening of task commitment and a higher rate of attrition. This same tendency to "downgrade" an occupation is expressed by Toren (1969, as cited in Etzioni, 1969), when the author refers to the definitions of what is referred to as the "semi-professions". These, "replace theoretical study by the acquisition of technical skill. Technical practice and knowledge is

the basis of such semi-professions as nursing. . . and social work" (p. 141).

COMMITMENT TO PARTICULAR ORGANIZATIONS OR INSTITUTIONAL POSITIONS

As a point of definition, Becker and Carper (1956) state that an occupational identity tends to specify the kinds of organizations, and positions within them, in which one's future lies, the places in which it is appropriate, desirable, or likely that one will work. Job security and clarity of hierarchical responsibilities become important to individuals in a professional environment. Unfortunately, the "professional person employed by a bureaucratic organization is the modern 'marginal man', his feet uncertainly planted in two different and partially conflicting institutional environments" (Scott, 1969, p. 89, as cited in Etzioni, 1969). Accordingly, Scott states that professionals desire and expect a large degree of autonomy from organizational control; they wish to exercise maximum discretion in carrying out their professional activities, free from hierarchical interference or confining procedural regulations. Finally, he states that "professionals are less likely to be responsive to organizationally controlled sanctions" (Scott, 1969, p.89). Numerous

empirical studies have shown some or all of these generalizations to hold for such professional groups as physicians, college professors and scientists.

Professional groups of similar varieties are reflected in Becker and Carper's study. In it, the physiology students saw themselves as occupants of a few well-defined slots in a highly organized work world, expecting jobs to become available through the workings of a sponsorship system centered around their graduate school professors. In contrast, the engineers felt that their future was defined "somewhere in the country's industrial system", but did not think of any company or position as impossible for them. The philosophers in the study suggested another dimension, a vagueness of knowledge of job availability and success in their future.

Follett, in her seminal work, Creative Experience, (1924) emphasized the need to consider the human element and social ethic in administration. If commitment to organizations were to be built, she stated that dynamic and harmonious human relationships were the key. As one of the primary founders of the human relations movement in organizational studies, her concepts of coordination became

instrumental in refocusing methods of supervisory and personnel practices. Some of the main tenets that may be carried through the organizations and professions include:

Coordination by direct contact - the persons responsible for work must be in direct contact regardless of their position in the organization.

Coordination in early stages - the persons responsible must be involved in the policy decision as these considerations are being formulated, not merely informed about the decisions after the fact. As a result of this, she stated that motivation and morale will increase.

Coordination as the "reciprocal" relationship of all factors in a situation - all factors surrounding a situation must be related to one another, and these existing relationships must be carefully weighed and considered.

Coordination as a continuing process - participative involvement, on-going relationships, internal communication, and other such considerations of coordination must be viewed as continuing responsibilities.

All of these factors examined in this seminal work begin to mesh with areas that may be considered to be included in task behaviors as

well. Follett believed that the human element was the pivotal force to establishing commitment of workers to the task and the organization. These areas described by Follett become significant when applied as processes to increase the professional commitment of workers to the organization. Becker and Carper indicate that when occupants of a profession see themselves in relation to others, in well-defined slots, the prognosis for their employment future is brighter.

Commitment to Organization: Teaching

Returning to Becker and Carper's framework, clarity of role in organizations and placement processes and support are important factors in any organization. In the profession of teaching adds additional factors to explain the attrition rates. There is growing evidence found in the research that differences in personal commitment to the educational profession and positive self-esteem may explain why individuals in the same work environment, having the same supervisor and possessing the same educational experience and backgrounds often respond differently to the same stressors (Farber, 1991). This element, also referred to as personal assurance, is mentioned as a pivotal factor in the decision-

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as a pivotal factor in the decision-making process throughout the literature. Several researchers have suggested that a lack of self-esteem is strongly related to burnout, which they suggest, has a direct causal relationship with the teacher attrition rate (Byrne, 1994; Farber, 1991; Hewitt, 1993). It has additionally been postulated that persons low in self-esteem were more threatened by ejection, and therefore more vulnerable to stress and burnout. One of the most enlightening findings described by Byrne in her study (1994), was the prominence of "personality variables" within the network. Of particular interest was the saliency of self-esteem as a critical and controlling factor in the predisposition of teachers to burnout. In addition to having an important effect on perceptions of personal accomplishment, self-esteem appears to function as an essential mediator variable through which effects of environment-based organizational factors filter. These variables contribute to the perception of a cloudy interpretation of role definition and commitment within an organizational structure. Personality variables complicate definite role definition and concomitant commitment or lack of it to the organization that may follow as a corollary.

Lortie (1969, as cited in Etzioni, 1969), divides the work rewards of

teachers into three groups: (1) extrinsic - defined as given quantities of money, prestige, and power, which are affixed to roles and 'belong' to those who occupy the role. (2) ancillary - are affixed to the role and may be perceived as benefits but which , since they are constant through time, become 'part of the job' rather than 'income' received for additional effort. Examples are security, the work calendar, and the physical environment and (3) intrinsic rewards firm which persons derive from their work. The area of ancillary rewards is high in status among teachers as their stability and job security is an area that is well defined among the occupation. This and the area of intrinsic rewards are of extreme importance to teachers, as they are characteristically dominant in the reasons stated for entering the occupation (p.33).

According to Lortie (1969, as cited in Etzioni, 1969) there is a predominance of transitive-intrinsic rewards that have important consequences for the teacher's stance concerning controls emanating from the hierarchy and from peers. This categorization of clarity of hiearchical responsibility is pertinent to Becker and Carper's (1956) positioning in an institution that led, in their study to an increased commitment to the organization. "One of the consequences of this patterning of rewards is

that it renders teachers more sensitive to students and less sensitive to administrative or collegial reactions. The teacher's immersion in teaching tasks and the relative indifference to organizational affairs affects the relationship with the principal and colleagues" (p. 35). As teachers disregard the areas over which they have little control, they exhibit less of an organizational commitment and less retention in the ranks.

The stability of the profession is illustrated through a common lack of interest in merit pay proposals, but rather in "across the board" raises for all. Lortie (1969) explains that the introduction of greater differentiation in extrinsic rewards would, strengthen the relative position of boards and administrators over teachers in a situation where teachers possess no formal power. According to this author, equality among teachers in extrinsic rewards neutralizes the exercise of administrative judgments and administrative sanctions.

Teachers are also clear where they stand in the hierarchy, often creating an internal apex with the mentoring system. To climb beyond this juncture, the teachers may consider the move to management, taking them away from the children. Job security can, in turn, create a

commitment of sorts by teachers to the organization. The organization provides tenure and security.

The literature points to a tendency to relate factors described by Becker and Carper (1965) as significant to the retention of teachers. Job clarity as reflected through tenure and security can add to the teaching ranks and keep teachers on the job. This is indicative of a type of organizational commitment. The strength of this commitment is impeded by the lack of involvement in the decision making process and resultant indifference to the organization outside of the classroom. Suggestions for improving the commitment, and ultimately a higher retention rate would include involvement of educators in the decision processes, beginning with the mission of the school and its members.

Commitment to Organization: Social Work

Professionals in various fields acknowledge that it is almost impossible to carry out professional work independent of large and complex organizations, hospitals, welfare agencies, and schools. Becker and Carper (1956) point to the necessity of clarification of roles on the job to personal commitments to the organization from its workers. As

Scott (1965) mentions, the bureaucracy often undermines this purpose. The student-professional in nursing, social work and teaching is partly trained in the bureaucratic frameworks, undergoing a process of anticipatory socialization to the role of a professional in a bureaucratic organization. However, according to Scott, (1965) "bureaucratic rules and authority are, more often than not, viewed as infringing upon the professional's freedom to apply his knowledge and skills according to his judgment and convictions" (P.76). This attitudinal stance somewhat limits the commitment of the social worker to the organization.

In a study by Scott (1969, as cited in Etzioni, 1969), social workers were examined in the following areas - professional orientation, criticism of agency standards and procedural regulations, desire for more autonomy, and low loyalty to the employing agency. All of these areas correlate to the teaching profession in degree of significance for organizational commitment and retention. These factors were positively associated with the degree of professional orientation. Thus, *professionals* were more likely than other types to criticize their employing organization.

The hierarchy of the organization itself becomes important in an

understanding of the social workers relationship with the 'agency'. a supervisory staff is required to insure that workers adhere to rules, to assist workers in handling those problems not fully covered by the rules, and to see to it that they put in a full day's work. All of these factors are considered necessary for the bureaucracy to communicate job clarity to the employees. The model of the social agency is one of bureaucratic dimensions. Professional social workers, however, prefer to view the social work agency as a 'service' organizations established to meet the complex and varying needs of a client population. The commitment on the part of the social worker emanates from that professional service rendered to each particular client, much like that a nurse gives to the patient, or a teacher to a student. While the possibility to move from caseworker to supervisory management exists, the move is seldom made due to the caseworker's reasons for entering the profession initially, one of service.

The same lack of organizational commitment that is found within the nursing and teaching professions are found in the social occupations, but it increases due to a lack of definition of the organization itself. While the nursing and teaching professions reside in a particular location

(hospital-school), the social professions perform their tasks required of the position outside of the realm of a "housing" (schools and hospitals), often in the homes of the clients. Often the only association that the social worker has with the organization is contained in the assignment of caseloads and the resultant paperwork. This deficiency is one of process assignment that Becker and Carper (1956) describe as detrimental to the establishment of organizational commitment.

SOCIAL POSITION

Occupational identities contain an implicit reference to the person's position in larger society, tending to specify the positions appropriate for persons doing such work or which have become possible for them. The most frequent reference is to social-class position and the opportunities for class mobility that is either opened up or closed off by entrance into the particular occupation. It is also possible for an identification to contain a statement of a particular relation to members of the occupation to the society, quite apart from class considerations.

This identification was found in Becker and Carper's case studies (1956). The physiology and engineering students saw themselves as

achieving a desired move up in the class system, or giving them a respected position without necessitating the competitiveness of business or medicine. The philosophy students contrasted as in all respects with the others, identifying themselves as "intellectuals", carrying the implication that they are different in important respects from other members of the society. Here we see a range of evidence, with the differentiating factor found within various occupations. Some similarities are evident with the social semi-professions of teaching, social work and nursing.

Social Position: Teaching

Most of those individuals studied that have entered the teaching profession experience a raise of social position from their current status, and often that of their parents. In a study by Bobbitt (1995), among teachers who stayed in the same school between school years 1990-91 and 1992, 53.4 percent of public school teachers felt that "providing higher salaries or fringe benefits" were the most effective steps that schools might take to encourage teachers to remain in teaching. In this study it was significant that teachers wanted the salary increases,

stating that they felt that this would place their desire for a "step up" in mobility, at least in terms of the change that the money could make in their life styles.

Occupational identities contain an implicit reference to the person's position in the larger society, tending to specify the positions appropriate for a person doing such work, or which have become possible for him or her by virtue of the work. There is, in the literature some continual reference additionally to class mobility which is either opened up, or closed off by a particular occupation as well.

Many teachers go to the poorest schools to ply their craft, thus surrounding themselves with students and parents from a lower socioeconomic of the society. An additional area explored in the literature is that of demographics. Ingersoll & Rossi (1995) examined the personal and public perception of social status in an occupation as related to the place of work. The authors indicated that teacher turnover rates were higher in public schools where half or more of the students received free or reduced-price lunches. The parents of these students often did not reflect a respect in terms of social position to the teachers, often due to negative childhood experiences within the schools (Ingersoll & Rossi,

1995). These schools averaged a teacher turnover rate of about 10 percent. The average turnover rate, according to this study, in the public schools with lower concentrations of such students was about 8 percent.

Teachers adhere to the framework established by Becker and Carper (1956) in most often entering the occupation looking for a "step up" in mobility and stability in lifestyle. The literature indicates that educators often associate that identity with its outside perception as interpreted by treatment by the immediate population. Higher socioeconomic areas tend to value education and educators in their craft, while lower socioeconomic areas often express a noninvolvement in the schools, or a lack of respect. That outside interpretation of the social position of teaching is often internalized by the educators within. The turnover rate of teachers in lower socioeconomic and rural areas is significantly higher than those in the more wealthy districts, indicating the importance of respect and social position to the educators as communicated from the immediate population.

Social Position: Nursing

Etzioni (1969) speaks of the social position of those individuals in the nursing position, and refers to nurses only in the feminine gender. This alone has implications for the profession as its ranks are most represented by women:

> The modern nurse is caught in the throes of change. Medicine has increasingly made her into an administrative specialist, while her heritage is that of bedside care for the individual patient. From her leaders she is under pressure to become a professional, while the physician and she herself are apt to doubt her qualifications as a professional. She is a woman who finds herself in a work situation where the most prestigious positions routinely go to men. She ranks low in occupational prestige and financial rewards. All of this has been documented again and again. (p. 54)

In addition to speaking of the low status of nurses, from the vantage point of her coworkers and supervisors, the tendency for women to move to low paying caregiving positions becomes evident through the singular issue of the feminine gender. The outside world reflects this same vantage point for nurses. They are not sought for scientific knowledge,

one of the indicators of a "profession", as cited by Etzioni (1969). In fact, this author speaks of an "unscalable wall" (p.69). between the physician and the semi-professionals (where nurses are regarded) in the hospital. Hospitals are spoken of as a caste system that is rigidly stratified, with the physicians at the top in "caste-like superordination above nurses" (p. 69). Etzioni (1969) also states that this unscalable wall for the feminine population is one of the primary reasons for attrition in the nursing world.

Nurses and nursing home social workers were found by Gleason-Wynn (1994) to have little or no upward mobility due to the lack of adequate continuing education programs designed to enhance their job. Koeske & Kirk (1995) add that low worker morale in the social professions and lower starting salaries contribute to the workers perception of a low of no growth situation in terms of upward mobility.

J. F. Mustard (1976) (as cited in Slayton & Trebilcock, 1976) cites a change in the education programs of health professionals as necessary to improve patient care and accessibility. This trend is discussed in the movement toward copractitioners (nurses and doctors) to fulfil the health care needs of the population. This change has implications for the social

position of nurses of the future.

In one group of programs (Spitzer, W., 1976, as cited in Slayton & Trebilcock, 1976), the new health worker was characterized as a true professional, a practitioner who exercises clinical judgment. The program was developed by Silver and Ford in Colorado and was the best example of this orientation to the "physician extender and has been widely emulated or adapted in the United States and Canada. In Canada this has developed into a practice in which physicians and nurses have become copractitioners in rendering care" (p. 212). This is an example of an expanding philosophy which has the potential to change the social status of those in the health professions, but is long in coming. The authors additionally further understanding, giving a definition of the type of new health professional under assessment: "A nurse practitioner is one who works as a member of a team, usually on a one-to-one basis with a physician. Although such an individual may function physically separate from the doctor, the nurse practitioner is in frequent, close interaction with the physician in the management of patients. Introduction of the nurse practitioner as a decision-making copractitioner is a substantive departure from the conventional mode of clinical management of patients

in primary care and has tremendous implications for the future of nursing.

Social Position: Social Work

Toren (1969, as cited in Etzioni, 1969), states, "social work is seeking to rise within the professional hierarchy, so that it might enjoy maximum prestige, authority and monopoly which presently belong to a few top professions" (p. 145). As the author sees it, social work possesses the main attributes characterizing a profession, but they are yet less highly developed and integrated than in the established (law, medicine) professions; therefore, social work still ranks relatively low on the continuum of professionalism. The knowledge base, which according to the author differentiates social work from the established professions, remains, to a large extent drawn from experience - i. e., generalizations inferred from many specific cases - and that a great deal of intuition is required in the application of this knowledge.

The upward mobility of social workers to a more "established" professional status is, in part, inhibited by a "shortage" of "authority recognized by the clientele of the professional group," and "broader community sanction and approval of this authority" (Toren, 1969). Part of

this lack of professional status can be attributed to the fact that only a small number of those practicing social work (16 per cent) have had full two year-graduate training, and only one third of the employed social workers are members of the National Association of Social Workers. Moreover, case work - i.e. therapeutic interviewing, which is the most "scientific" technique of the profession is used by other professional practitioners as well. According to Toren (1969), the discrepancy between the present development of theoretical knowledge and the value system of social work is the main factor contributing to its semi-professional status, and preventing any climb in social status.

Regarding points of origin of a profession, according to Toren (1969) the majority of social workers have always come from middle-class families, and "in the past few decades, they have been increasingly recruited from lower social strata" (p. 157). According to the author, this process may have a negative influence on the profession's prestige. If social work is identified as a low-class occupation, it will deter people from higher classes or with upper-mobility aspirations from choosing social work as a career.

An additional problem of locating a social status within a field is

added with the specialization in the subfields of social work, some more professional than others. For example, longer training and higher qualifications, a more theoretical and scientific basis of knowledge are required in family counseling or corrections than in public assistance agencies. This also means that workers in public welfare agencies have lower prestige, receive lower salaries, and have less autonomy than those in more specialized agencies (Toren, 1969). In 1960, "75 percent of the estimated 116,000 social welfare positions in the United States were occupied by persons without graduate degrees" (p. 161).

An additional point that becomes problematic for those in the social occupations is that there is in semi-professional organizations a great emphasis on hierarchical rank with duties differentiated by level. Activities in direct pursuit of the organizational goal occur mainly at the lower levels, As one goes up the ladder, administrative tasks tend to replace the semi-professional ones. This situation is in marked contrast to that of professional organizations, where distinguished professors continue their research and where eminent physicians treat patients. One result is that the performance of the primary tasks loses prestige among semi-professionals, while supervision and administrative activities

concerned with maintaining and representing the organization become the most rewarded ones. Such a reward system encourages the stress on rules and hierarchical accountability. It reduces dispositions toward employee autonomy.

The majority of semi-professionals have moved up from family origins below their present status. Mason reports that 62 per cent of the women starting to teach in the fall of 1956 were from blue-collar or farm backgrounds. If we assume that teachers whose fathers were clerks, salesmen, blue-collar workers or farmers had been upwardly mobile, 61 per cent of these teachers had moved up. Several studies suggest that a still higher percentage of nurses is upwardly mobile. The origins of teachers and nurses are lower than those of medical students, college social science faculty members, independent attorneys, or dental students (Marvin Bressler and William M. Kephart, Career Dynamics - Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Nurses Association, 1955). Social workers appear to come from somewhat higher backgrounds than teachers or nurses. In social work, as in teaching, upward intergenerational mobility is more common among men than among women, but it is evident in both sexes.

It is an important, and extremely significant point that the

professions being reviewed, teaching, social work and nursing are dominated by women. This factor adds to the theoretical framework established by Becker and Carper (1956) because the problematic issues affecting attrition in these occupations are not only different from those mentioned by the male dominated analysis, but is causal in the attrition process. Therefore, to add to this understanding, the next section, isolating gender as an issue through the professions is added.

Gender as an significant issue in social work, nursing and education

The issue of gender is an imperative that must be addressed in the professions of social work, nursing and education. All of these occupations have historically been female dominated, and remain so today. This fact brings specific areas that must be reviewed to assist an understanding for the process that must be begun if employees in these areas are to be retained at a higher rate than in the past. School districts, companies, and cooperate bureaucracies need to analyze and eventually remediate the areas of concern if they are to retain these valuable employees over a career. Understanding is the key.

Agassi (1979) noticed through reviewing earlier studies that

marital status had a different effect on the work attitudes of men and women as their commitment to employment and their self-image as basic earners. These earlier findings concluded that the change of status from single to married allegedly raises men's commitment to employment, yet lowers that of women. She began her study, assessing that the claims were vague and without proper examination. Her study was concerned with a possible change of level of commitment as might be exhibited by correlating it with age and to distinguish diverse attitudes and test their relation to marital status separately. Another factor that was examined was the possible polarization of men and women in the work force caused by the birth of children. Her study found that the presence of children in the home constitutes a motive for labor-force participation for men but an obstacle for many women. When there were two or more children at home, the percentages of employed mothers were smaller than those of fathers. Also, to be expected, when there was a child under five years at home, the difference was even bigger. Of the working men, 21.1 percent had one or more children under five at home, but only 7 percent of the women had one or more children under five at home.

As an extension of the 1979 study, Agassi examined reasons for

leaving jobs. The reasons were divided into categories of family and nonfamily. Family reasons were subdivided into a parenting and child-care subgroup and a second subgroup, other family reasons. For women, family reasons for leaving jobs made up nearly 20 percent of all reasons given; for men only 5 percent. Of these 20 percent, just over one-half were pregnancy and childcare; for men parenting and childcare were only 1 out of 5 percent. When one looks at the ensuing absences from the labor market, the differences between the sexes are extreme. Absences due to all family reasons made up nearly 70 percent of total time of all women's absence, but for men the figure was less than 1 percent. Nonfamily reasons for exit found a remarkable similarity between men and women in the percentage of different kinds of reasons given within this category. The author concluded in this phase of her study that it is not that women have a lack of commitment to their employment, it is that kinship responsibilities often provide for lengthy absences from the professions. This study corroborates the need for the addition of kinship responsibilities as an imperative in examining the profession of teaching (and the semi-professions) through the lens of Becker and Carper's (1956) theoretical framework.

Work hours have often been a research concern, one that is assumed to be oppositional to kinship responsibilities of women. Agassi (1979) also investigated the conventional assumption that women care much more about work hours "because of their domestic obligations which are time-bound: getting children to and from daycare; being at home when children come home, . . . - all of these are time-bound obligations that are conventionally considered to be exclusively or primarily that of the wife and mother" (p. 99). The overall indicator of concern for work hours for women was considerably higher than that for men, 95.0 compared with 59.2, which supported the assumptions about women's greater needs for time flexibility.

Agassi (1979) also found that the size of the domestic workload had a considerable impact on women's interest in advancement, but none on men's interest in advancement.

For organizations in which women work, their interrupted careers make it hard to keep a stable work force. Simpson and Simpson (1969, as cited in Etzioni, 1969) indicated annual turnover rates from about 11 percent to about 17 percent for school systems; within individual school systems the turnover was higher. The authors found that turnover was

about the same among men and women teachers, but for different reasons. It was found that men often change teaching jobs or leave teaching for administrative posts, whereas women more often stopped work altogether. Here it is important to note that different behaviors for men and women, in somewhat the same situations impacts the retention of teachers.

Family kinship responsibilities are revealed in the literature - marital status and men and women are polarized in the work force. These factors including the birth of children are significant in nature when examining the retention of individuals in a primarily female dominated occupation (particularly in the elementary grades) and nursing. Reactions of men and women differ in terms of prioritization of new roles and are shown through the literature as important in the impact of attrition in the occupation.

Social work, according to Toren (1969, as cited in Etzioni, 1969), is also identified in the mind of the public as a feminine occupation; the helping nurturent functions of the social worker are associated with the traditional roles of women. At the time of her writing, less than a third of all practicing social workers were men (p. 157). The relation among

existing sex ratio and heteronomy and the generally low prestige of social work is circular and cumulative: social workers are give less autonomy on the job, in part because the majority are women; on the other hand because of the more bureaucratic constraints and less prestige, the profession finds it difficult to recruit more men into its ranks (p.158). Simpson and Simpson (1969) also found that reasons for turnover for women in social work agencies are similar to those of teachers. Women again tend to leave the jobs for family reasons; men for professional advancement. In social work, it was found additionally that turnover appeared to be highest among young employees (mostly female) with little experience in their fields or tenure in their jobs.

Simpson and Simpson (1969) argue that bureaucratic supervision of the semi-professions is closely related to the prevalence of women in nursing, teaching, and social work. The authors assert that the public is less willing to grant autonomy to women than to men adding that women's primary attachment is to the family role, and they are therefore less intrinsically committed to work than men and less likely to maintain a high level of specialized knowledge. They also state that these primary attachments to the family roles make them less likely than men to

develop colleague reference group orientations. The authors argue that these reasons in addition to the cultural norm (historically) of women deferring to men, unfortunately often less to the willingness of women to accept the bureaucratic controls imposed on them in semi-professional organizations, and less likely to seek a genuinely professional status.

Easy upward mobility for women and the availability of " a temporary haven before marriage are not uncommon among the reasons for entering these occupations" (Simpson & Simpson, 1969, p. 200).

Also, the main intrinsic appeal of the semi-professions is one of caring. Research studies in teaching, nursing and social work all mention the need to help (children, patients and clients) as the primary reason for joining the profession. All of these occupations attract individuals who want to work with people and to be of service. These are the values that appeal more to women than to men, though the men entering these occupations are more characterized by such values than are men entering other fields. Simpson and Simpson state, " If women can satisfy their desires for service through family life, than there is usually insufficient motivation to create strong vocational commitments among women. They found that three times as many men as women expected their careers to

represent their major life satisfaction.

Simpson and Simpson go on to state that the culture defines woman's responsibility to home and family as her primary one and that when home and work obligations conflict, the home has to take precedence. While this study is reflective of a previous generation's service in the semi-professions, the fact is that many more women are found to occupy the occupations than men in this current generation.

For nurses whose commitment to nursing goes beyond its monetary rewards, there may be an emotionally-felt conflict between the two roles, but the home usually comes first (Simpson & Simpson, 1969, p. 207). This situation is described as common among married women, including those with specialized semi-professional or professional training.

Simpson and Simpson (1969) noted a disinclination to pursue continuous work careers which has been noted among students preparing for semi-professional work. They also noted that many nurses begin their careers with the anticipation of leaving them. The authors stated a common complaint by the nurses studied was that "marriage had made it hard for them to rise in the profession" (p.229). Stewart and Needham (1963) found that only 32 percent of the nursing supervisors studied were

married, compared with 58 percent of general duty nurses.

In the profession of nursing, research attests to the long, hard-working hours from irregular schedules, relatively low pay, and other strained relations with physicians and hospital administration (Hodges, 1980). These stresses act to drive women out of nursing. Hodges (1980) reports that the State of Virginia has 40,000 registered nurses and 17,000 licensed practicing nurses, but of those an estimated 30,000 nurses (both RNs and licensed practicing nurses) were non-practicing (were employed or work in other occupations). Thus, over three-fifths (over 60%) of licensed nurses in Virginia had left nursing at the time of the report. The helping nature of the profession is what draws women to the profession. Phillips (1982) reports that at the time of his study, nursing was 98 percent female. Yet, the menial and low-status nature of the tasks combined with the lack of flexible scheduling found in the occupation seem to be the very thing driving the nurses out. The nurses find it extremely difficult to commit to tasks that are not associated with the caring process, and continually subordinate them to the physicians.

Traditionally, the occupations to which women have had relatively

greater access have been the semi- or "helping" professions (Grossman & Chester, 1990). Grossman suggests that the reason for this is possibly because of their definition, like motherhood, in terms of circumscribed interpersonal power. Thus, helping professionals are expected to be caring, fair, wise, and pragmatic, with the goal of renunciation of any power over a given client, patient or student, as a result of their effective performance of their role.

While current studies (Grossman & Chester,1990) suggest that the need-for-achievement motive is more likely to be relevant in roles that are considered to be "norm appropriate", labor force patterns suggest that combining parenting and outside employment has become normative for contemporary women. The semi-professions are reflective of those that Grossman and Chester (1990) consider to be 'norm appropriate' and retention in those occupations seem to be dependent upon the realization by society that flexible scheduling and involvement in the decision-making process is imperative to their retention. These authors additionally add that "to some extent", the success of any mother's efforts to work outside the home will depend on external variables (i.e. status within the organization, flexibility regarding hours, availability of day

care, attitude of spouse) and the need for achievement within a particular occupation" (p. 85). Although combining work and parenting is still socially sanctioned, mothers who attempt to do so are faced with social and economic realities that make this a difficult choice. Katz and Kahn in 1978 documented the fact from their studies that simultaneous concerns with the work world and personal/family world may lead to role conflict, which in turn may reduce effectiveness in a given role, and produce stress (as cited in Grossman & Chester,1990, p. 144).

All of these references point to the significance of understanding patterns of kinship responsibilities and family circumstances to the retention of women in the semi-professions. Its impact as a variable in studying the retention within these occupations is provided by its addition to the analytical framework provided by Becker and Carper (1956). This category more fully explains the attrition process within the semi-professions. Research needs to be continued in these areas to create an understanding of factors that can and do motivate teachers to stay in the occupation. Much can be added to the field through small, purposive samples that explore the world of those in the teaching profession, and by adding the techniques of focused comparison and contrast.

Discussion and Conclusions

Drawing on the conceptual framework of Becker and Carper (1969), this literature review highlights five areas of work identification that serve to provide an understanding for the reasons individuals within a particular occupation stay or leave. Becker and Carper address beginning occupants of "the professions" of physiology, philosophy, and mechanical engineering, identifying four major areas of work identification: 1) occupational title and associated ideology; 2) commitment to task; 3) commitment to particular organizations or institutional positions; and 4) significance for one's position in a larger society. A fifth area not identified by Becker and Carper, but revealed by this reviews concerns is kinship responsibilities and family circumstances. The further analysis of each of these areas offers grounding to the reasons for staying and leaving, and a position from which to compare the attrition and retention rate of beginning teachers.

The first area, that of occupational title and associated ideology, found great identity factors within the subjects of Becker and Carper's case (1969). Within teaching, the specifics and significance of identity factors are reported as: 1) attitudes that contribute to affective matters

[these correlated with stayers] (Pigge, 1992; Juska, 1994); 2) peer support as a major factor in establishing the identity of individuals within the profession (Bryne, 1994; Hewitt, 1993); 3) mentoring programs as critical for the retention of first and second year teachers (Brookhart, 1992); and 4) understanding of the goals of an organization (Cunningham, 1982, 1983; Bryne, 1994) and roles within it. (This can avoid role conflict which correlates with a higher rate of attrition within the occupation.)

The second highlighted indicator, commitment to task, refers to the elements of attachment, or lack of them, to a specific set of tasks and ways of handling them. Pigge (1992) examined persisters and nonpersisters in teaching, forming the conclusion that assurance about the decision to teach and positive attitude relate directly to teachers that are staying in the field. The Carnegie Forum Task Force (Bobbitt, 1995) indicators found that teachers who were placed at the center of school decision-making were more committed to the task of teaching with "incompetent and uncooperative administrators" named as detractors; this was also corroborated through additional research (Cunningham, 1982; Bryne, 1994; Lortie, 1975; Natale, 1993; Hewitt, 1993).

Questions were raised within the research concerning task behaviors that were indicants of role conflict in teachers, including: 1) quantity and quality of work; 2) class size and special needs students; and 3) negative support from parents and administration in regard to disciplinary measures (Bryne, 1994; Hewitt, 1993; Bartell, 1995; Rollefson, 1990).

Thirdly, the issue of commitment to a particular organization or institutional position was defined and reviewed through a literature base. The salient specifics enumerated within this field were identified by degree of importance to the individual. The named categories include job security and clarity of hierarchical responsibilities. A conflict is often encountered among professionals who desire and expect a large degree of organizational control (Scott, 1969). Professional engineers in Becker and Carper's study (1969) reflected assurance of job availability, while the philosophy students, in contrast, expressed a vagueness of understanding of these areas and their specific future. Questions were raised concerning the commitment of teachers to their organization through the research, offering a resounding reply that compared the differences in personal assurance (or positive self-esteem) directly to the rate of staying or leaving in the occupations (Farber, 1991; Bryne,

1994; Hewitt, 1993). This causal relationship pointed to the need for more research in this area if the schools are to retain their good teachers. Research additionally indicated that educators respond to extrinsic, ancillary and intrinsic work rewards with varying degrees of commitment toward the organization (Lortie, 1969). The areas of ancillary and intrinsic rewards emerged as characteristically dominant as reasons for individuals to enter the occupation. These are factors that need to be further considered in the professional development programs available to educators.

The fourth indicant of identification within an occupation, was that of social position, a reference to a person's position in the larger society. Individuals found in this study provided similarities to the area of teaching, where research indicated that the majority of individuals entering the profession also experience a raise of social position from their current status (Bobbitt, 1995). This would seem to be an important factor in the retention of teachers, and is, but is often mediated in perception by the demographics of the area in which educators practice their craft (Ingersoll & Rossi, 1995; Hart & Assoc., 1992).

A fifth element contribution to the conceptual framework of Becker

and Carper (1969) was added through this research. Research has shown that differential factors begin to separate the "professions" and the "semi-professions" (teaching, nursing and social work) by the element of gender as evidenced through kinship and familial responsibilities. The size of the domestic work load and increased familial responsibilities were found to be constraining areas found within the "semi-professions" (Agassi, 1979; Simpson, 1969). Studies also indicated that dissimilar attitudes towards employment are prevalent in men and women, leading to a difference in the degree to which one commits to employment.

These semi-professions are similar in the association of a feminine area of work, a lack of autonomy on the job, and bureaucratic constraints resulting in less prestige for the members of the occupations (Toren, 1969). Elementary education finds more in common with these areas than secondary education, and often, as a result, finds it difficult to recruit more men into its ranks. There seems to be in the eyes of the public, and the profession itself, a certain "rank ordering" - the younger the child being taught, the less the prestige associated with the occupation. Indeed, it is not until ones moves totally away from children, to administration, that one finds a predominance of men and resultant

associated prestige.

The similarities between teaching, nursing and social work are great, but three areas that contribute significantly to attrition that contrast teaching with the latter occupations are important ones. These are the long and sporadic hours, unclear role definition and demeaning tasks within the professions of nursing and social work. Teaching brings with it stability, and the possibility for job-sharing, thus occasionally addressing familial responsibilities of its employees.

The reason most stated for entering the professions of teaching, nursing and social work reminds all readers of the nurturing nature of the professions themselves. It is to "make a difference" or "to help" (Agassi, 1979). This seems to be the draw that brings the majority to the occupations, and continues to exclude many men from its ranks. Research reminds us that rates of retention increase in all three professions when training and support is supplied for beginning individuals in the areas of : 1) peer support and mentoring; 2) Inservicing to provide a clear definition of roles in the organization and its goals; 3) Valuing and positive self-esteem building of individuals; and 4) Participation in the decision making of the organization. The role of decision making is a

significant one with immense implications for the growth of each of the discussed "semi-professions".

Finally, there is another area that of necessity must be addressed. In the "semi-professions" technical skill is named again and again as a culprit, keeping teachers, nurses and social workers beneath their "superiors". Technical skill needs to be combined with theoretical study if prestige is to be gained within these occupations. One suggestion for implementation of such a program would be through action research in teaching, combined with administration and higher education. A similar program could also be implemented through copractitioner and mentoring programs in other helping professions.

The five areas reviewed help to explain the salient factors in the low retention rate of teachers; however, there has been little research conducted recently concerning the changes underway in the semi-professions. If there is to be a change, an attitude needs to accompany it, addressing the lack of professionality in theory and substance in what have been referred to as the semi-professions.

This work raises questions in the field of retention of beginning teachers; If good teachers are to be retained, current practice and

research needs to acknowledge the previous detractors that are primarily associated with the dominance of women in the occupation (particularly elementary) and correct them by addressing the need for professionality of the individuals within the occupation.

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